

To Build a Fire--Study Questions

Name \_\_\_\_\_



2A 4A

1. What mechanical thing is mentioned in the first paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_  
When you next see this thing mentioned in the story, write the sentence on the back of this page.
2. What are the prevalent feelings and sights in the first paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the total length of the trail mentioned in paragraph two? Why do you think the author wants to be so specific? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is a *chechaquo* ? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why may the man's lack of "imagination" be a serious flaw? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What experiment does the man perform? Why is he surprised at the result? (285)  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Why is the man not with the rest of "the boys" at the camp on Henderson Creek?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How is the dog's reaction to the cold different than the man's? Why is it different?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Before this man, when was the trail last used? (287) Why may this be important?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Comment on these lines from page 287: "He was not much given to thinking..." and "Empty as the man's mind was of thoughts...". \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. What precaution has the man failed to take (third paragraph, page 287)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Read the first 10-15 lines on page 288? Make a prediction of what you think will happen later in the story. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. What happens to the dog at the bottom of page 288? What does it instinctively know to do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. What is happening to the man's fingers and toes? (289) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. What do we learn about the past generations of man (290) that is different than the past generations of wolves? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. What had the old-timer on Sulphur Creek told him the previous fall? (291)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. How does the man react to this advice after he gets his fire going (middle of 292)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. What does this sentence mean to you: "The wires were pretty well down between him and his finger ends"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
19. What mistake did the man make when he chose the location for his fire?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
20. What does the dog do (first paragraph, page 294) that lets us know it is in no danger from the intense cold? \_\_\_\_\_
21. How is the man's opinion of the old-timer differ on page 295 from his opinion on page 293? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
22. When the man fails to build a fire (296), what wild idea does he get?  
\_\_\_\_\_
23. What must the man do when he first stands up (296)? Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
24. In his panic (bottom of page 297) what does the man do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
25. As the man sits and rests (298), what strange sensation does he feel?  
\_\_\_\_\_

26. What hallucination does the man have (299)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

27. What does the man "say" to the old-timer? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

28. How do we know from the end of the story that the dog has been somewhat domesticated? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

29. Find where the word "pall" is used in the first paragraph. Now that you have finished the story, tell why you think London chose this word. (You may use a dictionary if you do not know the meaning.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

30. Why do you think we are not told the man's or the dog's name? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_